

SEPTEMBER 10, 2003

**SCHAKOWSKY, COLLEAGUES CALL
FOR RELEASE OF PENTAGON REPORT BLAMING FAILURES IN IRAQ ON BUSH
ADMINISTRATION POOR PLANNING**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Chief Deputy Whip, joined her colleagues at a news conference today to demand the release of a secret Pentagon report, which blames the Bush Administration's poor planning for failures in post war Iraq. The members joined U.S. Representative Robert Wexler (D-FL), chief sponsor of H.Res. 364, a resolution that would force the Bush Administration to provide Congress with a copy of the report prepared for the Joint Chiefs of Staff titled, "Operation Iraqi Freedom Strategic Lessons Learned."

Below is Schakowsky's statement:

"I am honored to stand here today with my colleagues seeking the release of the report titled "Operation Iraqi Freedom Strategic Lessons Learned." And I want to thank Congressman Robert Wexler for his leadership on this issue.

"More than 140,000 US soldiers are pinned down in Iraq, being shot at and ambushed every day. Two more soldiers were killed in the past 24 hours. Military families are telling us that their sons and daughters are in desperate need of basic essentials. They send them packages with toilet paper, socks, and sanitary napkins. And the Bush Administration's reconstruction efforts in Iraq are failing - the Iraqi people are without jobs, lights or hope.

"It is clear now that President Bush did not have an adequate plan to secure and rebuilt Iraq, guarantee the safety of our troops, or secure an international force to ease the burden. But don't take our word for it. The report we are calling on the President to release concluded, "The extent of the planning required was underestimated. Insufficient U.S. government assets existed to accomplish the mission."

"The Washington Times has obtained a copy of the secret report. In a September 3, 2003 story, the Washington Times wrote: ".the report lays the blame for setbacks in Iraq on a flawed and rushed war-planning process that 'limited the focus' for preparing for

post-Saddam Hussein operations," and that ".planners were not given enough time to put together the best blueprint for what is called Phase IV - the ongoing reconstruction of Iraq."

"President Bush approved the war plan in August of 2002, months before the first missile was fired on Iraq and while refusing to acknowledge to the American people that war was imminent. This plan has been a disaster, yet the President refuses to level with the American people or hold those in his cabinet responsible for our failures in Iraq. H.Res. 364 would ensure that we have access to the Pentagon's critical analysis of the Bush plan in Iraq. Of course, President Bush can decide to release the report without a Congressional mandate. Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz could hand over the report to Congress on their way out of town."